

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02 H-01 CIAE-00

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SP-02 /059 W

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R 271410Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4277

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 0926

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, WA, US

SUBJECT: PROMINENT BLACK AMERICAN REPORTED TO HAVE VISITED
NAMIBIA

1. CAPE TIMES AND RAND DAILY MAIL REPORTED DECEMBER 25 THAT SOUTH AFRICA'S AMBASSADOR TO UN, PIK BOTHA, MADE "SECRET VISIT TO SOUTH WEST AFRICA WITH AN AMERICAN POLITICIAN" DECEMBER 21. PRESS ACCOUNTS QUOTED WINDHOEK SOURCES AS SAYING THAT BOTHA AND "AN AMERICAN NEGRO CONGRESSMAN, A MR. WILLIAMS, FLEW TO THE TERRITORY IN A MILITARY JET." THEY REPORTEDLY MET WITH BILLY MARAIS, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S REPRESENTATIVE IN SWA, AND ALSO VISTED OWAMBO. WHEN ASKED BY NEWSPAPERS WHETHER HE HAD MADE VISIT WITH AN AMERICAN BLACK, BOTHA REFUSED TO COMMENT.

2. IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION TODAY, MARAIS TOLD US HE DID MEET WITH A BLACK AMERICAN, BUT SAID THAT HIS VISITOR WAS INTRODUCED ONLY AS MR. WILLIAMS AND NOT OTHERWISE IDENTIFIED. WE ALSO MADE INQUIRY WITH DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL, WHO SAID HE UNABLE GIVE US INFORMATION. HE

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SUGGESTED WE CONTACT AMBASSADOR BOTHA.

3. BOTHA, WHO TALKED TO US BY PHONE FROM HIS PRETORIA HOME, SAID HE HAD NEVER STATED TO PRESS THAT AN AMERICAN NEGRO CONGRESSMAN HAD VISITED SWA. IMPLICITLY ADMITTING THAT HE DID VISIT TERRITORY WITH AN AMERICAN BLACK, BOTHA STRESSED THAT HE WAS NOT ACCOMPANIED BY AN AMERICAN CONGRESSMAN OR AN AMERICAN HOLDING ANY POSITION OR HAVING DIRECT CONNECTION WITH USG. HE REQUESTED THAT IF PRESS ASKED EMBASSY ABOUT VISIT, WE NOT REVEAL WE HAD SPOKEN TO HIM. HE ADDED THAT PERHAPS AT A "MORE OPPORTUNE MOMENT" HE COULD TELL US MORE ABOUT VISIT.

4. COMMENT: SOME WEEKS AGO, SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS REPORTED THAT FRANKLIN WILLIAMS, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO GHANA, MIGHT ATTEND "BLACK RENAISSANCE CONVENTION" WHICH WAS HELD DEC 14-16 AT HAMMANSKRAAL (CAPE TOWN A-139). WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ONE WAY OR THE OTHER WHETHER WILLIAMS ATTENDED CONFERENCE OR, IF HE DID, WHETHER HE IS THE MAN BOTHA TOOK TO NAMIBIA. WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE AS TO PURPOSE OF VISIT AND WHY SAG OFFICIALS BEING SO CAGEY WITH US ABOUT WHO VISITOR WAS, ALTHOUGH WE CAN UNDERSTAND THAT ANY PROMINENT BLACK AMERICAN WOULD PREFER IT NOT BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE HE TRAVELLED TO NAMIBIA UNDER AUSPICES OF SAG.
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